



EUPHA Working Group on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment – SDG5

Today, on International Women's Day, we are happy to announce the formation of a new Working Group (WG) at the European Public Health Association (EUPHA). The WG on Gender Equality and on Women's Empowerment will focus on capturing the perspectives of all EUPHA Sections to comprehensively map the needs, the priorities and key actioning areas in European and global public health in order to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls and meet Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDG5) of the United Nations. **#EUPHA4SDG5 #IWD2021**

SDG5

Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. Gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world.

Mindful of the need to support gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls across the European Region and beyond, we aim to develop a comprehensive strategy, incl. for gender mainstreaming, against all forms of discrimination and with due consideration to intersectionality, to support researchers, practitioners, advocates and policymakers.

Gender-related issues are closely tied to all aspects of improving the lives of everyone in our communities, whereas every individual, independently of gender, can play a key role in the work for gender equality. We need to work towards evidence-informed recommendations to create gender-responsive health systems, also, with the involvement of civil society whenever possible.

Our WG, and EUPHA, welcomes the [statement of Dr Hans Kluge](#), the WHO Regional Director for Europe, highlighting the need to build back better, with women in the lead. Indeed, at a time when the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted and, in many cases, further exacerbated underlying structural gender inequalities, it is more important than ever before to acknowledge the role of women in the workforce, as well as their role in informal care, and effectively address the severe socioeconomic disparities and health inequalities experienced by women. The COVID-19 pandemic, and the containment measures, have placed an additional burden on women, both in terms of informal care and in terms of caring for children and families. Ensuring they receive adequate support is key. At the same time, it is critical to recognise gender equality is critical for democratic, context-relevant and effective decision-making. We also note the need to eliminate gender-based violence and to safeguard the mental health and wellbeing of women, to avoid putting at risk not only individuals, but, indeed, our whole society. Last, but not least, we emphasize the need to empower and support women leaders in European and global public health.

The Working Group will develop its strategy so as to:

- Raise awareness on gender equality, and on the empowerment of women and girls
- Advocate for sound representation across decision-making fora
- Identify best practices, develop networks and serve any/every priority highlighted on these key topics by all EUPHA Sections
- Support women leaders and young women leaders

- Focus on gender mainstreaming, intersectionality and anti-discriminatory practices to build post COVID-19 societies and economies
- Give voice to women leaders' narratives
- Advocate for the development of leadership capacities in women to help mitigate cultural, organisational and contextual barriers
- Engage in research on models of inclusive leadership and governance that challenge traditional social and gender hierarchies.
- Use COVID-19 political, economic and social crisis as a springboard to prepare for better more equal future
- Partner with other entities and stakeholders active in related areas to meet SDG5

The WG will be releasing its full strategy in April 2021. We welcome the input and the involvement of all EUPHA members, but also, of everyone active in European and global public health, or in related efforts across sectors, to meet SDG5.

Elena Petelos, WG Acting Chair and VP EUPHA HTA, and the Core WG Members:

Monica-Georgiana Brînzac, EUPHAnxt Coordinator

Kasia Czabanowska, Former President of the Association of the Schools of Public Health in the European Region (ASPHER) and Chair of the EUPHA WG on Public Health Leadership

Chiara de Waure, President HTA

Lorena Dini, Vice President EUPHA Health Services Research

Ellen Kuhlman, President EUPHA Health Workforce Research

Dimitra Lingri, Managing Director of the European Healthcare Fraud and Corruption Network (EHFCN) and Member of EUPHA LAW and EUPHA HTA

Iveta Nagyova, President of EUPHA

Maria Papadakaki, President of EUPHA Injury Prevention and Safety Promotion Section

Dineke Zeegers, Executive Director of EUPHA